

# *Be* TIME *W*ISE

**The Art of Conversation  
or Improve Your  
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**Lack of Sleep Shrinks Your  
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# The Art of Conversation or Improve Your Conversation Skills

*When it comes to the art of conversation we've all met people who seem to have knack for it. They can talk to anybody about anything and they seem to do it with complete ease. And while it's true that there are those who are born with the gift of gab, luckily for the rest of us, conversation skills can be developed and mastered.*

## QUICK-TIPS FOR THE ART OF CONVERSATION

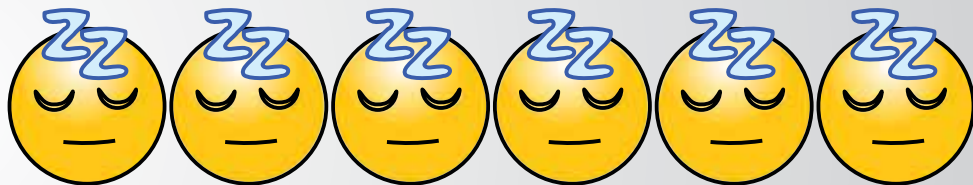
- Do not dominate a conversation or make it all about you. A monologue is not conversation.
- Show interest and curiosity in others.
- Strive for a balance of give and take.
- Be an active listener by maintaining good eye contact and asking pertinent questions.
- Train yourself to relax by using visualization, meditation, or other relaxation methods. Being relaxed is vital for good conversation.
- Do not interrupt and cut in with your own ideas before the other person is finished speaking.
- Maintain an open mind; everyone has a right to express themselves even if you don't agree with what they are saying.
- Although this is cliché, try to avoid topics such as sex, religion and politics. You would be surprised at how many people get trapped by them and end up in verbal battle, not conversation.
- Be prepared by staying on top of the latest news, developments and world events.
- Be approachable by staying relaxed, smiling and maintaining a friendly attitude.

*Possessing the art of conversation improves personal, social and work relationships. It gives you the opportunity to meet interesting new people and introduces you to various new topics and subject matter. With practice and application anyone can improve their conversation skills.*

# LACK OF SLEEP SHRINKS YOUR BRAIN

As kids we wanted no part of it. As adults we often can't get enough of it. And some of us are even proud that we "don't need" much of it. Sleep. No matter what our age or feelings about sleep, the benefits have been proven in study after study. If you don't sleep enough, even if you don't think you are tired the next day, you won't function at full capacity and you'll be more prone to making mistakes and losing focus. But now, we have learned that the penalty for not getting enough restful sleep is much worse than that.

According to a powerful new study, not getting enough sleep can literally shrink key parts of your brain. If you know that you don't sleep enough (or well enough) and wish you could sleep more or better—or if you are one of those “heroes” who thinks not sleeping is a badge of honor—you must have this new information.



## BRAIN LOSS IS REAL

The study, which was conducted by researchers from the University of Oslo in Norway, analyzed the brains and sleeping habits of 147 adults who ranged in age from 20 to 84. As part of the study, researchers took two MRI scans of the participants' brains three-and-a-half years apart. The participants also filled out sleep-quality questionnaires that measured how long and how well they slept over a one-month period. “Poor sleep” generally means that a person takes a long time to fall asleep and/or wakes up frequently during the night and/or doesn't get enough deep sleep.

After analyzing all the data, the researchers found that poor sleep was associated with reduced volume in the right frontal lobe of the brain. Among other things, the frontal lobe is responsible for problem-solving, making choices and memory. Poor sleep was also associated with deterioration of parts of the temporal and parietal lobes. The temporal lobe helps us sense sights and sounds but also regulates our personality, moods and behavior. The parietal lobe helps us interpret sensory information, including touch and visual perspective. Pretty important parts of the brain, in other words.

## THE SLEEP (AND AGE) CONNECTION

Sleep gives the brain the chance to repair itself in a way similar to how a “defrag” application removes noise and waste from a computer so that it runs more efficiently. But this process seems to naturally become less efficient as we age. Numerous studies have borne this out, and the study on sleep and changes to brain structure did show that changes were more conspicuous in participants who were older than 60. This led the study researchers to question whether poor sleep leads to brain changes (shrinkage and deterioration)...or, in contrast, age-related brain changes lead to poor sleep.

Sleep problems and age-related brain changes might go together as a vicious cycle. Other studies have linked poor sleep with poor cognition and an increased risk of Alzheimer’s disease. But whether lack of sleep ages the brain or an aging brain thwarts sleep, there is only one side of that equation that you can profoundly alter. And you know you can’t keep yourself from aging!

This is why it is vitally important that you do everything you can to keep your brain fit. And that includes getting a restful night’s sleep. The National Sleep Foundation provides these tips...

- Stay on schedule. To the extent you can, stick to the same bedtime and wakeup time to train your body to keep with a healthful sleep-wake cycle.
- Get ready. Relax before you go to sleep. In particular, turn off your electronic devices, such as your computer and television, about an hour before bed and let quiet time replace distraction time.
- Skip the cat nap. Just as snacking can ruin your appetite for mealtime, napping can leave you sleepless at night, so make an effort to limit daytime naps and, as mentioned above, reinforce a sleep- and wake-time schedule.
- Don’t force the issue. If you can’t sleep, don’t force it. Get up, read a book, have a cup of soothing chamomile or passion flower tea and try again later.
- Pass on the nightcap. Don’t drink alcohol close to bedtime. Although an alcoholic drink can help lull you to sleep, it can adversely affect how well you sleep, and you will often find yourself waking up feeling restless and dehydrated a few hours later.



*Source: Study titled "Poor sleep quality is associated with increased cortical atrophy in community-dwelling adults," published in Neurology.*

# Manners

# Conversation Skills

Speech is an important form of communication. Every time you open your mouth, you reveal something about yourself to someone else - not just in what you say, but how you say it, so speak clearly and sincerely. Make yourself heard without shouting, interrupting or talking over others. Say what you think and how you feel, but say it without hurting others' feelings. Some conversation do's and don'ts include:

## Conversation DO'S

- Look at the person or people you are talking to
- If you haven't met before, introduce yourself and ask their name
- Use a person's name when talking to them
- Ask questions when you don't understand something
- Stick to the subject
- Say nice things about people and praise those who deserve it
- It's fine to disagree, but disagree politely

## Conversation DON'TS

- Don't fidget, look elsewhere, or wander off while someone else is talking
- Don't listen in on conversations you aren't part of
- Don't interrupt when someone else is talking
- Don't whisper in front of another person
- Don't whine, tattletale, brag, or say mean things about others
- Don't ask personal questions such as how much things cost or why someone looks or dresses the way they do
- Don't point or stare
- Don't argue about things that aren't important

## Some Magic Words to Being Polite

- "Thank You"
- "Please"
- "May I ... "
- "Excuse Me"
- "I'm Sorry"



# 5 SECRETS TO BECOMING A COMMUNICATION EXPERT

Do you want to be a better communicator?  
Who doesn't?

Not all of us are blessed with an innate ability to express ourselves through words. In fact, public speaking consistently ranks as the number one fear humans have. We fear public speaking even more than death! It's no surprise, then, that many of us have trouble communicating well on a day-to-day basis. If you're one of these people who really has to work hard to communicate effectively, then you know how much of a struggle it can be. Poor communication only leads to conflict and far too much drama. So if you want to change your life and communicate more effectively without ending every conversation with an argument, then check out these ways you can become a communication expert in your own life.

## Stop Talking About Yourself

It's easy to forget about your audience, especially when you're talking about yourself. The truth is, however, that talking about yourself creates a barrier between you and your audience. After a few minutes, your audience isn't going to care anymore.

One needs to tailor talks about how effective communication involves tailoring your message to your audience: "Tailoring communication activities means understanding and identifying appropriate cultural codes reflected through the use of symbols, metaphors, and visuals, including the types of actors, spokespeople, and music with which your audience most identifies."

Tailoring your message also involves the way in which you order your words to change an audience's reaction to what you're saying. Even when you're telling a story about your own experiences, there's no need to talk about yourself. I know; it sounds like a complete bogus piece of advice, right?

Instead, focus on your audience. What problems do they have, and how will your experiences benefit them? Frame your story in a way that focuses on your audience first, and be sure you do enough research to know who your audience is and how they will react. That includes in everyday conversations, not just in public speaking.



## Ask Unique Questions

Not asking unique, personal questions is one of the worst mistakes you can make and can easily kill a relationship. Instead of asking, “How was your day?” ask something like, “What did you do during your free time today?”

A simple question like, “How was your day?” is so common that it becomes insincere over time. Plus, it’s too easy to reply with, “Eh, it was okay,” without any room to elaborate.

Asking more specific questions gets people to open up more. Be sure you switch up your questions each time you encounter the same person; this will prevent you from sounding insincere.

## Limit Your Words

Do you tend to over explain yourself and fill your conversation or emails with nothing but fluff? You’re not the only one, but now is the perfect time to break this habit. One of the best ways to improve your communication skills is to be brief but specific. Whenever you’re typing out an email or wondering what to say in a phone message, make an effort to limit your words. It will save you time and effort, and people will love you for it.

Then, choose only the most important information to share. If you think you have to explain yourself on something, you probably don’t.

Be sure there’s room to include a call-to-action or closing statement. In an email, something like, “I look forward to hearing back from you,” is a good option.

## Don’t Talk Bull

“If you have bad news to deliver, lay it out plainly. . . It is far better to be straight with them than not to communicate at all, even if you can’t give them the answers they’d like.”

When you try to beat around the bush, it only wastes time and annoys people. You can be straightforward without compromising your emotions or hurting other people’s feelings, so don’t be afraid to face difficult conversations head-on.

*Definitely don’t avoid the situation. That will only prevent communication on all levels.*



## Shut Up for a Minute

Listening effectively is one of the key components to great communication.

“Research has found that by listening effectively, you will get more information from the people you manage, you will increase others’ trust in you, you will reduce conflict, you will better understand how to motivate others, and you will inspire a higher level of commitment in the people you manage.”

Even if you think you’re an effective communicator, chance are you only listen at 25 percent efficiency, reports Wright State University. So just sit back and start listening for a moment before you interject with your opinion.

But shutting up does more than just making you a better listener. It also:

- Keeps you from interrupting.
- Prevents you from finishing other people’s sentences.
- Gives you a chance to evaluate your body language so that it’s fit for the situation.
- Allows you to think about what the other person is feeling.
- Gives you a chance to really understand your own argument and adjust your thoughts before you start speaking.

Do you think that you’re an effective communicator?



# 10 THINGS YOU SHOULD STOP DOING IN 2015 TO SAVE MORE

Was one of your New Year resolutions to save more money in 2015? After the holidays most people's bank balances are suffering, but the New Year can be a great time to get hold of your finances and put some money aside. Check out 10 things you can stop doing to save more money.



## **Stop spending without saving**

If you spend a lot of money on one thing, from taxis to coffee to shoes, try using it as a spend and save item. Every time you splurge on your treat, put the exact amount in a savings account too. The best part is you don't have to give up your vice, but you make savings every time you treat yourself.

## **Stop shopping without grocery list**

You will tend to walk by every aisle when you do your weekly shop. Try making a list of what you require and that will keep you focused as to what you need to look for. The savings may only be a couple of dollars, but with every grocery shop you do the money will add up.

## **Stop buying lunch for work**

Most people buy their lunch for work to save time, but making your own will give your bank account some serious relief. Store-bought lunches are often much more expensive than the home-made alternative, and over a year the prices can really add up. Save yourself money every week by making your own to bring in with you.

### **Stop buying coffee daily**

While many people feel faint at the idea of tackling a working day without caffeine, switching to the coffee in your kitchen can save you some serious money. Buying one coffee a day may not seem like much, but it adds up over the year.

Try getting your caffeine fix before you leave the house, and taking a Thermos or bottle of tap water with you for the day to cut down costs.

### **Stop spending your wage impulsively**

Even though it may seem difficult, most people can afford to put a little money aside each week. From \$3 to \$30, the amount will add up over 2015 and could put a serious dent in any debt and bills you have at the end of the year.

Keep your savings in a jar or envelope in a visible place in your house, so you remember to keep adding money to it every week.

### **Stop using your bank card**

If you take out money at ATMs throughout the week, you could be spending more than you actually need to. Try working out exactly how much money you need at the beginning of the week, then take it all out and don't use your card again. This can stop overspending on unnecessary luxuries such as taxis and snacks.

### **Stop spending so much on going out**

Going out is a great chance to socialize and let your hair down. However – food, alcohol, taxis, tipping – the truth is that going out is often pricey. Take one week a month where you stay at home and save some money. Invite your friends around for a movie marathon and you will barely even notice your bank account is taking a rest.

### **Stop letting money flow away without records**

Take a week where you write down how much you spend each day, and what on. This is a great way to know exactly how much you spend a week, and if you are spending any money you don't need to. If you get buses regularly, work out if it would be cheaper for you to get a bus pass. Ask yourself: did I buy anything this week that was a waste of my money?

### **Stop choosing your dinner before you make it**

Food can be cheap when you eat at home, but take-out and restaurant costs can more than triple your food budget. Try planning your meals and shopping for the ingredients at the beginning of every week to deter yourself from ordering in.

### **Stop guessing and start calculating**

People often struggle to save when they don't know exactly what they are saving for. Do you want to buy a house, a car, or pay off student debts? Focus on your goals and what you personally want to achieve. When you know what you're saving for, work out exactly how much you need to save, and how long it will take you to do. Good luck!

# Everyone Should Learn The Mindset Of Productive People



We all know people who just seem to get things done; but have you ever noticed that productive people tend to be happier and more well-rounded too?

The skills that achievers use to help them complete tasks, hit deadlines, and finish projects are the same skills that can help you become a happier, more balanced individual in every part of your life.

Everyone should aspire to build a productive mindset. Here are eight tips to improve both your productivity and your life:

## Be Solution-focused

If you focus too long on a problem, it can really start to bog you down. You can end up going around in circles, feeling more and more frustrated and worried about the pickle you're in, rather than doing anything to fix what's wrong. Productive individuals take one good look at the problem and then immediately move on to search for solutions. Focusing on finding answers helps you feel more in control and gets you out of the problem more quickly. Finding solutions helps you accomplish things, and the sense of pride you get from that can make you feel happier too.

## Put Down Boundaries

If you're always saying 'yes' to people or going out of your way to accommodate others while neglecting your own needs and goals, you're unlikely to meet your own targets, and you're likely to end up feeling resentful and bitter. Learning to say 'no' to things that don't serve you frees up your own time and promotes a feeling of self-respect. There's nothing wrong with helping others or giving your time and attention to them, but you must only do so when it doesn't cross your own boundaries or eat into what you need to do. Choose what and who you say 'yes' to carefully at home and at work.

## Have a Healthy Routine

Some of the most productive people in the world swear by similar morning routines. Rising early to have an exercise session, a protein-rich breakfast, and a spot of meditation feature in many particularly productive people's mornings from big business owners to presidents. Having a good start to the day gives you all sorts of benefits, including a clearer head, a healthier body, a better mood, and more focus.

## Streamline your Life

You might marvel at how much productive people seem to get done in a day, but what you'll usually find is that they've set things up in a way that makes it easier for them to succeed. Whether it's putting automated systems in place, delegating, or just having all the necessary tools ready to hand, productive people have a head-start because they've simplified and streamlined their processes. If you invest a little time in decluttering, preparing, and organising, you'll not only save yourself time in the long-run, but you'll save yourself stress and headaches. And you'll have much more time to do the things you really value later on.

## Look at the Bigger Picture

Productive people don't get distracted because they've always got the bigger picture in mind. They don't think about a report as a piece of administration or see a spreadsheet as a list of numbers, instead they view these things as necessary steps to achieve their goals. And beyond that, they'll know why this particular goal is of value to them and how it will enhance their life overall. Whether it's to make money, to gain security, or to revolutionise the world, productive people see tasks as vital cogs in the greater machinery of their project and their life. Whenever you need to do anything important, bear in mind how good it will make you feel to do it or how it will enhance your well-being. Focusing on these positive things allows you to stay motivated and happy at home and at work.

## Be Positive About Yourself

People who don't get things done are often waylaid by their own lack of self-belief. If you don't think you're capable of achieving anything, why even try? Productive people put their best foot forward and don't allow negative self-talk to steer them away from their goals. Not only does a healthy sense of self-efficacy help you focus and achieve more, but respecting your unique skills, qualities and strengths will make you feel happier too. It's really a self-fulfilling prophecy — if you pep talk yourself, you'll probably find that you've got much more to cheer about because you're more likely to perform better when you have a positive focus.

## Know Nothing Has to Be Perfect

If you tried to be perfect in everything you did, you'd never ever get anything done. Perfection is an impossible marker, and trying to live up to it just leaves you feeling frustrated and depressed. Productive people focus on doing their very best, but don't allow a few flaws to delay their dreams or stop their progress. Not only does letting go of perfectionism allow you to get more done, it also takes the pressure off you, letting you enjoy what you are doing and have more fun with it.

## Respect Time

If you really thought about what's precious in life, you'd realise that time is one of the most valuable commodities — it's one that we only get a certain amount of, and once it's gone, we can't get it back. Productive people know the value of time and have a healthy respect for it, which is partly why they are able to stay so focused. You'd find it far less tempting to play Candy Crush if you knew it was your last day on Earth. Respect the time that you have in the world and it'll be easier to live your life to the fullest, cherishing and enjoying every moment.



Topic For  
Jan 2015

## SELF DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR

# Learn The Skills of Conversing

DATE:

**10 FEBRUARY 2015**

TIME:

**6.00PM - 8.00PM**

VENUE:

**BANKER'S CLUB**

GALLERY 2 (Level 22),

Jalan Imbi,

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Possessing the art of conversation improves personal, social and work relationships. It gives you the opportunity to meet interesting new people and introduces you to various new topics and subject matter. With practice and application anyone can improve their conversation skills.

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US AT [SALES@VENTRAX.COM.MY](mailto:SALES@VENTRAX.COM.MY) TO BOOK YOUR SEAT.**

**free**



## TIME MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

The Time Management Workshop is specially designed to help you understand and use the planner. The better you organise your time with your planner, the better you can use your time for attaining your personal and organizational goals. You're most welcome to bring along your friends and colleagues.

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*Reflections*

**"YOU WON'T SAVE TIME BY LOOKING FOR IT IN LARGE BLOCKS. LOOK FOR IT IN SMALL PIECES INSTEAD. SAVE 20 SECONDS EVERY 5 MINUTES, AND BY THE END OF THE DAY, YOU WOULD HAVE SAVED AN HOUR."**

# Excellent tips by Warren Buffett



## On Earning

Never depend on single income. Make investment to create a second source.

## On Spending

If you buy things you do not need, soon you will have to sell things you need.

## On Savings

Do not save what is left after spending, but spend what is left after saving.

## On Taking Risks

Never test the depth of river with both feet.

## On Investment

Do not put all eggs in one basket

## On Expectations

Honesty is a very expensive gift. Do not expect it from cheap people



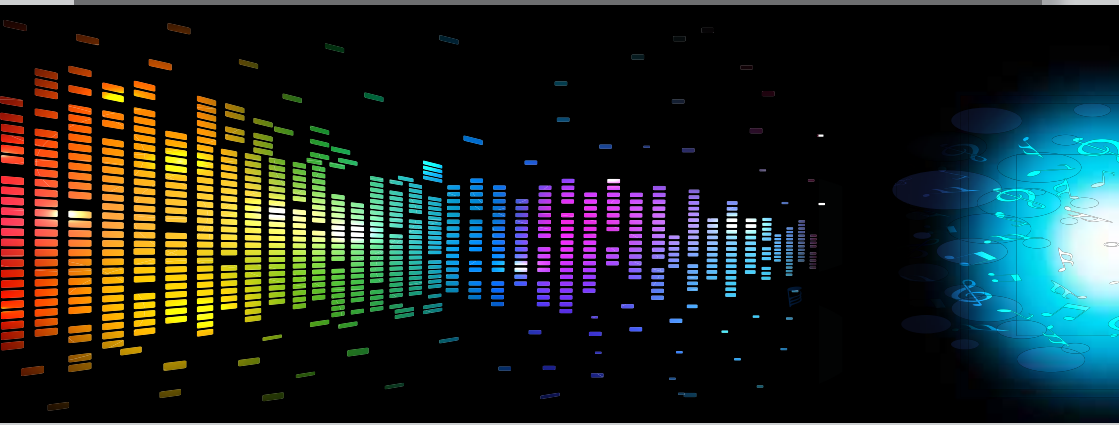
*Highlight...*  
**Self Management  
with Dr. Venga**



When we talk about self management in time management, we are basically targeting to finish the task you have to do with minimal time wasted.

While doing this, you aim to improve the organisation of your work, thus giving you better results. If you are able to manage yourself well, you should be less frantic, attain greater satisfaction with your work, generate higher motivation for yourself, increase your qualifications for more difficult tasks, face less pressure at work, make fewer mistakes while finishing your tasks, gain better results and enjoy better quality of life.

Your biggest advantage is that you will control your most precious and important resource – your time.





## Annual Refill 2015 ORDER FORM



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